

Ealing Symphony Orchestra @100

ELGAR *Pomp and Circumstance* March No. 4
George LLOYD *Symphony No. 2 in E major*

Paul LEWIS *Seaside Concerto* for Organ and Orchestra
STRAVINSKY *The Firebird Suite*

Ealing Symphony Orchestra
John GIBBONS musical director
Richard HILLS organ

Saturday, 9 July 2022 · 7.30pm
St Barnabas Church, Pitshanger Lane, W5 1QG

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John Gibbons musical director

John Gibbons is a multi-faceted musician: conductor, composer, arranger, pianist, and organist, who works across musical genres including opera, cathedral music, and recording neglected British orchestral music.

John has conducted most of the major British orchestras including the BBC Symphony Orchestra, London Philharmonic Orchestra, City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra, BBC Concert Orchestra, Royal Scottish National Orchestra, Ulster Orchestra, the Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra, and, most recently, the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra.

He has recorded orchestral works by Nikos Skalkottas with the Philharmonia Orchestra, the string concertos of Arthur Benjamin with the RSN0 on the Dutton Epoch label, four Mozart Piano Concertos with Idil Biret — two with the London Mozart Players and two with the Worthing Symphony Orchestra, Bruckner's Ninth Symphony (with a completion of the finale by Nors Josephson) with the Aarhus Symphony Orchestra on the Danacord label, and William Wordsworth's *Orchestral Works* (Vol. 1) on the Toccata label.

Renowned for his adventurous programming, John has given many world and UK premieres of both new pieces (most recently the Triple Concerto by Errollyn Wallen with Kosmos Ensemble and WSO in Chichester Cathedral) and neglected works including the Third Orchestral Set by Charles Ives, the Violin Concerto by Robert Still, and both the Second Piano Concerto and Violin Concerto by William Alwyn. His performance of George Lloyd's Fourth Symphony with the Ealing Symphony Orchestra drew an ecstatic review from Simon Heffer in the Daily Telegraph.

John recorded Laura Rossi's film score *The Battle of the Ancre* (Pinewood Studios) and conducted the BBC Concert Orchestra in her score to *The Battle of the*



Somme at the live screening in the Royal Festival Hall to commemorate the centenary of the ending of this battle.

Overseas work includes Walton's First Symphony with the George Enescu Philharmonic as well as concerts with the Macedonian Philharmonic, the Çukurova Symphony (Turkey), the Portuguese Symphony Orchestra, and performances of Malcolm Arnold's Fourth Symphony in Latvia and Vaughan Williams's *A Sea Symphony* in Worms, Germany.

John Gibbons studied music at Queens' College, Cambridge, the Royal Academy of Music, and the Royal College of Music, winning numerous awards as conductor, pianist, and accompanist. He assisted John Eliot Gardiner on the 'Leonore' project and the recording of music by Percy Grainger, and was Leonard Slatkin's second conductor for a performance of Charles Ives's Fourth Symphony with the Concertgebouw Orchestra in Amsterdam.

He has conducted numerous opera productions at Opera Holland Park with particular emphasis on Verdi, Puccini, and the verismo composers, including Mascagni's *Iris* and Cilea's *Adriana Lecouvreur*. He conducted *La Bohème* for the Spier

Festival in South Africa, toured *Hansel & Gretel* around Ireland with Opera Northern Ireland and Opera Theatre Company, and conducted a number of productions for English Touring Opera. John's orchestral reductions include Walton's *Troilus & Cressida* for Opera St Louis, Missouri and Karl Jenkins's *Stabat Mater*.

John, a renowned communicator with audiences, is a Fellow of the Royal Society of Arts, Vice-Chairman of the British Music Society, and Choral Director at Clifton Cathedral. His own music has been performed in various abbeys and cathedrals as well as at the Southbank, London. ||

A word from ESO Chair, Jo Boswell

Tonight's concert marks the close of the ESO's Centenary Season, and we are delighted to perform for you this evening in celebration of this milestone. We are also marking the occasion with the publication of a book, *Ealing Symphony Orchestra @100 – Our Story*. One of our members, Jan Robinson, has spent the last two years trawling through our archives and reaching out to former and current members to gather their recollections. Jan marshalled a small team of dedicated researchers to piece together this story of how the ESO came into existence, and how it has developed over the decades since it was founded.

The ESO owes its existence to two remarkable women, having been founded in 1921 by Theresa Freebairn-Smith, who recruited Constance Martin as the Orchestra's first conductor. There can be few amateur orchestras in the UK who have reached their hundredth birthday; but amongst those who have, I imagine there are even fewer who owe their existence to an entirely female team. This book reveals how these two determined and talented women brought their vision of community music-making to life.

The spirit of enthusiasm and sense of fun they brought to the Orchestra in those early years persists today.



When Orchestra members were asked in 2020 to describe the ESO, the words which occurred most frequently included 'family', 'friendship', 'fun', 'challenging', and 'achievement'. What an enduring legacy for those two remarkable women.

If you wish to delve further into the history of the Orchestra and how it has developed during its 100-year existence, the book is available to purchase this evening for £10.



Richard Hills (b. 1980) is widely acknowledged as one of the very few musicians to have bridged and mastered the divide between the classical and theatre organ worlds. Having studied with William Whitehead at Rochester Cathedral he went on in turn to the organ scholarships of Exeter College Oxford, Portsmouth Cathedral, and Westminster Abbey where his teachers included Rosemary Field and David Sanger. He now combines a freelance solo career with continuo, choir-training, and teaching work and is the Organist of St Mary's, Bourne Street, a central-London church noted for its Anglo-Catholic Liturgy and fine musical tradition.

Richard's career in the theatre organ world has been equally prestigious. He has numerous prizes and awards to his credit, both in this country and in the USA, where he was named 'Organist of the Year' in 2010 by the American Theatre Organ Society. He has appeared many times as

a soloist on national and international TV and Radio in programmes as diverse as BBC Radio 3's *Choral Evensong* and BBC Radio 2's *Friday Night is Music Night*, and he made his solo debut at the BBC Proms in 2013. He returned again to the Proms as a soloist in 2015, and appeared with the BBC Scottish Symphony and John Wilson Orchestras during the 2019 Proms season. 2019 also saw a solo recital at London's Royal Festival Hall, alongside concerts in the USA, Europe, and Sweden. His many recording credits include, most recently, a disc of British music made on the magnificent dual-purpose Compton organ of Southampton's Guildhall, which earned a five-star review in *Choir and Organ* magazine.

Richard is a Fellow of the Royal College of Organists and a strong supporter of the work of the UK's Cinema Organ Society, to whom he serves as Musical Adviser. ||

Edward Elgar (1857–1934)

Pomp and Circumstance Military Marches, Op. 39 March No. 4 in G major

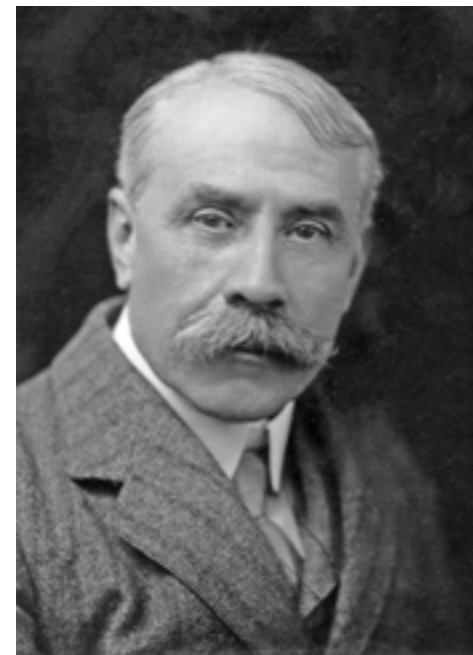
When in 1901 he thought up a tune which in his words would “knock ‘em flat”, Elgar, who was highly knowledgeable about literature, found the title for his first military march in Act III, Scene iii of Shakespeare's *Othello*:

*Farewell the neighing steed,
and the shrill trump,
The spirit-stirring drum,
the ear-piercing fife,
The Royal banner, and all quality,
Pride, Pomp, and Circumstance
of glorious war!*

Eventually there would be five *Pomp and Circumstance* Marches, the first four written quite close together, although the fifth waited until 1930 before the inspiration struck Elgar. The fourth March was completed on 7 June 1907, and first performed on 24 August at Queen's Hall, conducted by Elgar.

The opening section consists of repeated two-bar rhythmic phrases or a regular rhythmic pattern, the swelling tune which forms the lyrical Trio is heard twice before the opening returns, and then a third time in full orchestral dress before the rousing coda.

The March is dedicated to G. R. (George) Sinclair, organist of Hereford Cathedral whose bulldog, Dan, is the subject of the GRS variation in the *Enigma Variations*.



The *Pomp and Circumstance* Marches are all published by Boosey and Hawkes, because Elgar had a serious argument with his normal publisher, Novello, about the cost of the orchestral parts for the first performance of the *Enigma Variations*, and the relationship was not restored for a couple of years. ||



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George Lloyd (1913–1998)

Symphony No. 2 in E major

Con brio

Largo

Alla marcia

Andante, con malinconia

Biographies of George Lloyd rightly stress the enormous impact which his wartime service on board HMS Trinidad had on every aspect of his life, in particular the devastating effect of the ship's sinking, struck by a faulty torpedo, leaving the crew struggling in fuel oil and freezing Arctic waters, with Lloyd one of only seventeen survivors.

However, fewer people take note of his early life and the influences which set the framework for his musical development. Lloyd's father William, who had been born in Rome, was an enthusiast for Italian opera and wrote a biography of Bellini. Lloyd's mother played the violin, which she taught to young George from the age of five, viola and piano, and both parents were leading members of the St Ives Arts Club, so that their house was a regular weekly venue for chamber music. George grew up with music around him, and began to compose at an early age. Although he studied at Trinity College in London much of his musical education took place at home through his family, and his father would regularly take him on trips to London to experience opera at Covent Garden.

George and his father together founded The New English Opera Company in 1935, with the intention of establishing a school of English opera. George Lloyd's first opera, *Iernin*, with a libretto written by his father, was inspired by The Nine Maidens standing stones near St Columb Major, and tells the story of one of the Maidens who comes back to life as a fairy. Lloyd completed the music within 12 months.

Its premiere on 5 November 1934 at the Pavilion in Penzance was seen by Frank Howes, the Times critic, who gave it such an enthusiastic write-up that the work was given at the Lyceum Theatre in London.

As a result Lloyd's second opera, *The Serf*, was written for Covent Garden and premiered there in 1938, conducted by Albert Coates and staged by Vladimir Rosing. During the writing Lloyd married Nancy Juvet, who had been born in Switzerland. Although musically a success, the production was generally considered a disaster. Despite this, it toured to Liverpool and Glasgow and Lloyd seemed set to be a major musical figure — as an opera composer. Indeed, if the war and particularly the experience of HMS Trinidad had not intervened, Lloyd would have developed as an opera composer, and his three early symphonies written in 1932–1933 would have been regarded as a purely youthful exercise. After the war Lloyd made one further attempt to establish himself as an opera composer: *John Socman* was commissioned by the Festival of Britain. The opera was premiered in Liverpool and toured by the Carl Rosa Company, although Lloyd was utterly dissatisfied with the way this was done, and after a chaotic presentation in Belfast, swore never to go into a theatre again. The repetiteur for these performances was the young Edward Downes, who would prove to be decisive in reviving Lloyd's music nearly thirty years later.

Lloyd himself noted that his early symphonies have little or nothing to do with

the heroic or expansive tradition of English symphonies of the 1930s, including Bax, Moeran, and Walton. Lloyd's first symphony was written when the composer was just 19; it was premiered in 1932 by the Penzance Orchestral Society, conducted by Lloyd, and then repeated, a rare event for a new work, in 1933 by the Bournemouth Municipal Orchestra, also with the composer conducting. Lloyd also conducted the work at Trinity College.

His Second Symphony was written in February–March 1933, shortly before the composer reached his 20th birthday, and was premiered in 1934 by the Eastbourne Symphony Orchestra, also conducted by Lloyd, although only three of the four movements were played. The composer revised the score in 1982 but even so, the symphony was not played again until the composer conducted it in January 1986 with the BBC Philharmonic. Tonight's performance may possibly be only the second complete performance...

This symphony was soon followed by a third, and the composer conducted the premiere with the BBC Symphony Orchestra in 1935, but by then the path to opera seemed set and it would be more than ten years before Lloyd returned to a symphony.

The Second Symphony demonstrates that Lloyd completely understood the impetus that contrasts of mood, texture, and rhythm provide and the symphony encompasses a wide range of mood, highlighted by Lloyd's evident feeling for orchestral colour, marked by solo lines for many different instruments.

The first movement, marked *Con brio*, opens with a dramatic gesture of rushing strings, which returns several times, punctuated by a two-note figure on trumpets, and syncopated brass motifs; a major clarinet solo, developed in exchange with all the strings, sounds almost playful, but



leads into a bold sturdy theme carried by brass. The music subsides and energised rhythmic figures constantly push the music forward, building to a brilliant climax which ends abruptly.

The *Largo* opens with a solo horn meditation, elegiac in character, then woodwind respond and expand this melody in dialogue with the strings, creating an idyllic mood. Solos for violins and clarinet disturb the idyll, and are in turn developed across the orchestra as the music gradually builds to a peak of intensity, which then fades away.

There is no Scherzo in the traditional sense. The third movement is a march, beginning very jauntily, which cellos develop into a stirring march, not without an ominous side. A strident passage for brass and timpani intervenes and the march continues towards an expansive coda, abruptly cut off.

The Finale, *Andante con malinconia*, opens in a brooding sinister frame, marked by a long sinuous bassoon solo. Brass introduce a fanfare which develops into a major climax, superseded by a deft version of the strident brass theme from the previous movement introduced by piccolo. The ominous opening is recalled and the music fades to silence in long held chords. ||

Programme Notes

Paul Lewis (1943-)

Seaside Concerto for Mighty Wurlitzer (or Organ) and Orchestra

Horrificoso

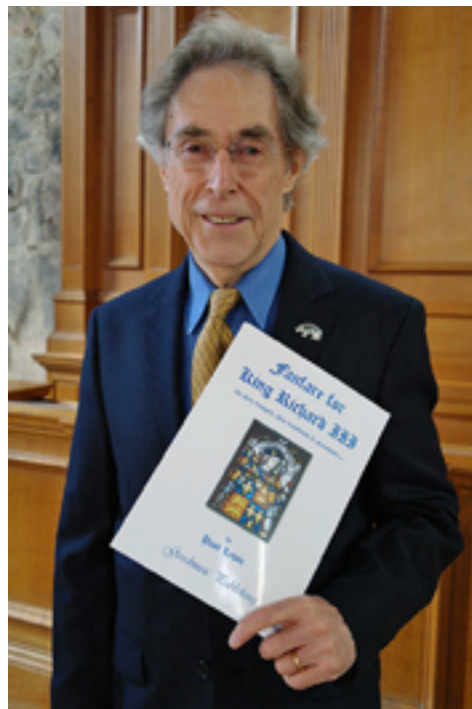
Sentimental Ballad and Waltz

Scherzo-on-Sea

Paul Lewis is another English composer who has spent most of his composing life being unfashionable and being recognised and appreciated only quite late in life, though for quite different reasons from George Lloyd. Paul Lewis was born in Brighton in 1943 and began learning the piano, reluctantly, at the age of nine. The experience of hearing Walton's music for Laurence Olivier's film of *Richard III* at the age of twelve convinced him that his destiny was to be a composer.

Rather than follow the conventional path to music college, Paul Lewis joined a firm of music publishers, and the gamble paid off; within a few years his orchestra scores were being recorded in music libraries and used in cinema newsreels. He joined ABC Television (not the Australian Broadcasting Corporation) although he remained there for only three years, and over the next 47 years wrote scores for over 150 series covering the whole range, from drama to comedy and children's entertainment, as well as single programmes, eventually being himself the subject of a documentary in 1995.

In the last ten years Paul Lewis has focused on writing concert music and has produced an extensive range of orchestral, concerto and chamber music. His highly developed sense of associating music and landscape is reflected in many titles, *Devonshire Dances* for harp and chamber orchestra, *Norfolk Concerto* for flute, harp, and strings, *Overture Brighton Beach* among many others. Paul Lewis himself notes that he is "frequently inspired by friends (musicians and others),



historical personages, and places dear to me in England, France, and New Zealand." Paul spent four years in New Zealand from 2008 with his third wife, the soprano Sharon Elizabeth, and is her frequent recital accompanist.

Having been inspired by Walton's music to *Richard III*, the discovery of the remains of Richard III under a Leicester car park in 2012 was a major event for Paul who responded with a *Fanfare for King Richard III* for brass and percussion, whose premiere he conducted in York Guildhall, to coincide with the King's reburial in Leicester. >

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This led to a commission *Threnody for Solo Violin: The Most Famous Prince of Blessed Memory* for a concert in Richard's honour in September 2015.

Paul Lewis has provided this programme note about his concerto:

“*Seaside Concerto* is a celebration of a world of seaside music, now vanished, that I witnessed as a child. My violinist mother and her siblings played in silent movie picture houses in London in their teens, and with the advent of talkies my Aunt Gladys performed interludes on the Mighty Wurlitzer between films. After moving to Brighton at the outbreak of World War II the family remained leading members of the light music scene from Hastings to Worthing for over forty years, my mother, my Uncle Sam, and his wife also playing in the Worthing Municipal Orchestra, now

the Worthing Symphony Orchestra, for whom this work was written.

The movements are:

Horrificoso! — Silent movie Gothic horror, Ghost Train on the pier, and Chamber of Horrors at the Waxworks.

Sentimental Ballad and Waltz — Love song from an imaginary pre-war stage musical, holiday romances and dancing at the local ballroom.

Scherzo-on-Sea — All the fun of the vintage seafront with the assistance of the old-time popular song *Oh! I Do Like to Be Beside the Seaside.*”

Seaside Concerto was generously commissioned by John Gibbons and was premiered on 2 April 2017 with Richard Hills at the Worthing Wurlitzer and John Gibbons conducting the Worthing Symphony Orchestra. ||

Igor Stravinsky (1882–1971)

The *Firebird* Suite (1945)

Introduction —

Prelude and Dance of the Firebird —

Variations (Firebird) — *Pantomime I* —

Pas de deux: Firebird and Ivan Tsarevich — *Pantomime II* —

Scherzo: Dance of the Princesses — *Pantomime III* —

Rondo (Khovord) —

Infernal Dance —

Lullaby (Firebird) —

Final Hymn

Stravinsky began his career as virtually the composer by appointment to Diaghilev's Ballets Russes. This association began almost by accident: Diaghilev had heard Stravinsky's *Scherzo Fantastique* in 1909 and had sensed potential in a composer others had dismissed as lightweight.

Diaghilev intended that the 1910 Paris season of his Ballets Russes should be the first to present only ballet and as such it was essential to have an important new

work as a showcase for the Ballets' many talents. Diaghilev and his collaborators were agreed on a subject from Russian folk legend and Diaghilev commissioned music from Anatoly Liadov but by November 1909 no music had been written. With only six months to go before the planned premiere, Diaghilev turned in some desperation to Stravinsky, who justified this trust completely. He was already composing his opera, *The Nightin-*

gale, but interrupted this and began work on *The Firebird*. In close collaboration with the choreographer Fokine, who had prepared a detailed scenario, he composed with amazing speed and the 45-minute ballet was complete in comfortable time for its premiere on 25 June 1910. This launched Stravinsky's career as an international composer, which eventually long outlasted his association with Diaghilev.

Stravinsky's original score was vividly expressive and nationalistic, leaning heavily on the style of Rimsky-Korsakov. The original orchestration called for 120 players, including quadruple woodwind, three harps and multiple percussion. Stravinsky learned from Rimsky the technique of associating diatonic folk melodies with the human characters and chromatic melodies with the magical.

In 1911 Stravinsky made his first suite from the ballet. In 1919, sensitive to the post-war restrictions on cost, anxious to secure further performances, and believing that he had no further connection with his previous Russian publisher, he made another suite, using more effective movements and reducing the scoring to double woodwind, single harp, and less percussion. This proved immediately popular and satisfactory and became a cornerstone of the composer's own conducting career. Unfortunately the original Russian publisher successfully sued for the return of the copyright and Stravinsky suffered severely reduced royalties. In 1945, having taken American citizenship, he made this third suite, published in the US, to secure renewed royalties. By this stage Stravinsky wanted to reinvent himself and disguise the lush post-romantic style of his early work. He included two extra dances and three short linking scenes, again revised the scoring and thereby guaranteed his income.

The story concerns the rescue by the



Tsarevich Ivan, led by the Firebird, of Princesses captured by the evil ogre Kashchei, whose magic can have turned their suitors to stone and whose soul is hidden in an egg-shell casket, rendering him immortal.

The Suite begins with the ballet's *Introduction*, revealing Kashchei's garden in the still darkness. The Firebird appears and dances in the moonlight. She is pursued and captured by Prince Ivan and pleads with him for her release (*Pas de deux*). Ivan is moved and frees her, and in return she gives him a single feather, with which he may summon her in time of crisis (*Variations*). The captive princesses emerge for their nightly hour of freedom and in a *Scherzo* toss golden apples back and forth. The stately *Rondo* which Ivan shares with them ends in his facing the one maiden with whom he has inevitably fallen in love. A trumpet call is heard heralding dawn; Stravinsky then omits the fearful return of the captives within the castle and the appearance of the green-taloned Kashchei, his interrogation of Ivan and

the beginning of the incantation to turn him to stone. Ivan waves the feather, the Firebird appears and bewitches Kashchei and his court. The Suite resumes with their *Infernal Dance*, after which they collapse, while the Firebird dances her *Lullaby* and Ivan rushes to search for the casket, then omits the gradual awakening of Kashchei and the moment when Ivan finds the casket and shatters it with his sword. In that instant Kashchei expires, his castle and court vanish, the petrified warriors and princesses are freed and darkness descends. In the *Final Hymn*, light slowly returns to reveal the wedding procession of

Ivan and his chosen Princess. As the Firebird bestows her blessing, her chromatic motif is harmonised in radiant major triads.

The 1945 Suite, conducted by Stravinsky, was included in his last concert in the UK, in 1963, at the Royal Festival Hall with the New Philharmonia Orchestra. The televised broadcast revealed the intense concentration and minimal gestures of the composer/conductor and his occasional wilful disregard of his own metronome marks. ||

Programme notes by Dominic Nudd.



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As tonight's concert celebrates our Centenary Season, we thought it would be appropriate to place the spotlight on the member of the Orchestra with the longest tenure. Hilary Potts (viola) joined ESO in 1968, at the insistence of her husband Ian who realised that she should join an Orchestra before starting a family and committed to ensuring that she could still attend rehearsals once her first child was born.

As well as being a stalwart of the viola section, Hilary also served as Librarian on the Committee from 2006 to 2015. Hilary and Ian have also supported the orchestra as Friends for many years; and when Ian was Mayor of Ealing in 2003–2004 he invited the orchestra to play at Acton Town Hall to celebrate the 40th anniversary of the borough.

The following is an edited extract from Hilary's entry in the *ESO Memories* collection.

My Musical Life

I started the piano at about eight, after acquiring a stepmother who was a piano teacher and therefore brought a piano with her. When I went to Manchester High School it was suggested I might take up another instrument. Although I was keen to learn oboe or French horn, I was advised to learn violin or viola. I'd never heard of the latter but was assured that I'd always be in demand because there would never be enough viola players. I still love the sound of oboe and French horn and, have over the years, had the opportunity to try them out — but had I had my original choice I would never have played string quartets.

My teacher, Miss Forster (who taught every decent violin or viola player I knew at the time), formed all the post-Grade 5 pupils into string quartets and provided the music and coaching in our lunch hours. Before leaving school, I had played lots of Haydn, Mozart, and early Beethoven and



competed at music festivals against adult quartets. As for orchestral playing, I was put into the school Junior Orchestra after ten lessons and the Senior Orchestra a year or two later. In 1958 I joined the two-year-old Stockport Youth under Paul Ward. We were very ambitious, tackling modern works which he cheerfully told us were far too hard for us and it was quite an eye-opener to encounter some of them in ESO years later.

Other people I played with joined the National Youth Orchestra, founded in 1947, but I realised I was not good enough and didn't apply. However, I did go twice to orchestra courses in the summer holidays under Ernest Read (then a very old man) and to a quartet course run by the Aeolian 30 String Quartet. Their second violin was at the time Trevor Williams, who many years later was to teach my daughter Elizabeth. At Oxford I didn't join the University Orchestra but played in dozens of college chamber orchestra and small ensemble concerts, many at the famous Holywell Music Rooms. At the same time, I think being in the Bach Choir made more of an impact, especially going to Coventry Cathedral to sing Beethoven's *Missa Solemnis* in 1963.

When I joined the ESO in 1968 (then conducted by Niso Ticciati) I was surprised to find there were already six or seven violas led by Ron Evans, and I gradually moved up to join him. ||



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Thank you all.

Gary Walker
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Richard Partridge*

Clarinets

David Weedon*
Felicity Bardell
Barbara James

Bassoons

Gary Walker*
Steve Warrington*

Horns

Pamela Wise
Charles Clark-Maxwell
Catherine Fox
Paul Jefferson

Trumpets

Richard Davies
Fergus Pateman
Nelson Falcó Cordes

Trombones

Martyn Humphreys
Felix McGonigal
David Fletcher

Tuba

Alan Henry

Percussion

Andrew Barnard
Matthew Fletcher
Patriks Kabardis
Margie Harrison

Keyboards

Fionnuala Ward

Harp

Glain Dafydd

* Committee members



We are always happy to hear from potential new members! Rehearsals are on Thursdays near Ealing Broadway. To find out more, please visit our website: ealingso.org.uk/join, or email us at contact@ealingso.org.uk.



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